

**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION**

**Bowdle School District
Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process Report 2002-2003**

Team Members: Linda Shirley, Mary Borgman, Education Specialists

Dates of On Site Visit: March 11, 2003

Date of Report: March 27, 2003

This report contains the results of the steering committee's self-assessment and the validation of the self-assessment by the Office of Special Education. The report addresses six principles – General Supervision, Free Appropriate Public Education, Appropriate Evaluation, Procedural Safeguards, Individualized Education Program and Least Restrictive Environment. Each principle is rated based on the following scale:

Promising Practice	The district/agency exceeds this requirement through the implementation of innovative, high-quality programming and instructional practices.
Meets Requirements	The district/agency consistently meets this requirement.
Needs Improvement	The district/agency has met this requirement but has identified areas of weakness that left unaddressed may result in non-compliance.
Out of Compliance	The district/agency consistently does not meet this requirement.
Not applicable	In a small number of cases, the standard may not be applicable for your district/agency. If an item is not applicable, the steering committee should briefly explain why the item is NA. Example – no private schools within the district boundaries.

Principle 1 – General Supervision
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General supervision means the school district's administrative responsibilities to ensure federal and state regulations are implemented and a free appropriate public education is provided for each eligible child with a disability. The specific areas addressed in principle one are child find, referral procedures, children voluntarily enrolled by parents in private schools, students placed by the school district, improving results through performance goals and indicators (assessment, drop out, graduation), professional development, suspension and expulsion rates.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive Plan
- News Release
- Screening Announcement
- Radio Announcement
- File Reviews

- Enrollment Data
- Annual Application for IDEA Funds

Meets requirements

The steering committee determined areas of maintenance in their self-assessment to be that the district consistently offers preschool screenings, child find announcements, and has an established referral process. The district has procedures in place that meets the requirement for long term suspension and expulsion.

Needs improvement

The steering committee determined areas of needs improvement in their self-assessment to be that students placed in a private school or facility need to have an active IEP. Based on the number of students served and the different ability and age levels served, the staff in the resource room may be inadequate. Standardized testing is being implemented district-wide, but currently there is no system in place for analyzing the SAT 9 data.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

The monitoring team agrees with all areas for meets requirements for general supervision as concluded by the steering committee.

Needs improvement

The monitoring team agrees with all the areas for needs improvement for general supervision as concluded by the steering committee.

Out of compliance

24:05:16:16:01. Paraprofessionals and assistants

Through interviews, the monitoring team found the district has not trained paraprofessionals who are working with special needs students. Training is done on an informal basis and is not consistent with the policies in the comprehensive plan.

Principle 2 – Free Appropriate Public Education

All eligible children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The specific areas addressed in principle two are the provision of FAPE to children residing in group homes, foster homes, or institutions, making FAPE available when a child reaches his/her 3rd birthday and providing FAPE to eligible children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 cumulative days.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive Plan
- File Reviews

- Student Referrals
- District Staff Surveys
- Preschool Screening List
- Student Referral List
- Parent Surveys
- Teacher/Administrator Surveys
- Cooperative Procedure Manual

Meets requirements

The steering committee determined areas of meets requirements in their self-assessment to be that the school district never denies FAPE to any child. A FAPE is provided to all children in the district.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

The monitoring team agrees with all the areas of meets requirements for free appropriate public education as concluded by the steering committee.

Principle 3 – Appropriate Evaluation

A comprehensive evaluation is conducted by a team of knowledgeable staff, which also includes parental input. A valid and reliable evaluation will result in effective individualized education programs for eligible students. The specific areas addressed in principle three are written notice and consent for evaluation, evaluation procedures and instruments, eligibility determination, reevaluation and continuing eligibility.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- District Evaluation List
- Comprehensive Plan
- Student File Reviews
- Compliance Monitoring Report
- Interview
- District Procedure
- Student File Reviews
- Monitoring Report
- Parent Surveys
- Teacher Surveys
- Cooperative Forms
- Student File Reviews
- Evaluation List
- Evaluation Manuals
- Eligibility Technical Assistance Guide
- Override Procedures
- Prior Notice/Consent Form

Meets requirements

The steering committee determined areas of meets requirements in their self-assessment to be that the school district conducts 3 year evaluations, re-evaluations and dismissal evaluations for all students.

Needs improvement

The steering committee determined areas of needs improvement in their self-assessment to be that the district needs to get consent for teacher and student surveys. Functional assessment reports need to state when the evaluation was completed, as to make it clear that the 25 day timeline was met.

Validation Results**Meets requirements**

The monitoring team agrees with all areas for meets requirements for appropriate evaluation as concluded by the steering committee.

Needs improvement

The monitoring team agrees with all the areas for needs improvement for appropriate evaluation as concluded by the steering committee.

Out of compliance**24:05:04:02. Determination of needed evaluation data**

A team of individuals, including input from the student's parents, determines what evaluation data is needed to support eligibility and the child's special education needs. Through interviews and file reviews the monitoring team found that the staff does not consistently implement a procedure for documenting parental input. Evidence of parent involvement into the evaluation process was not available in a review of 5/10 student records.

24:05:25:04. Evaluation procedures

School districts shall ensure, at a minimum, that a child is assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability and those evaluation procedures include a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional and developmental information about the child. This is to include information provided by parents that may assist in determining whether the child is a child with a disability and the content of the child's IEP.

Five out of five speech files reviewed showed no functional assessment in the evaluation process. Two files reviewed on students sixteen and older did not have a transition evaluation completed. Four other files reviewed showed functional assessments being done, but the skills were not specific and they were not carried over into the present levels of performance.

Principle 4 – Procedural Safeguards
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Parents of children with disabilities have certain rights available. The school makes parents aware of these rights and makes sure they are understood. The specific areas addressed in principle four are adult student/transfer of rights, content of rights, consent, written notice, confidentiality and access to records, independent educational evaluation (IEE), complaint procedures, and due process hearings.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive Plan
- Oahe Cooperative Procedure Manual
- Parent Rights Brochure
- Prior Notice Form
- District Comprehensive Plan
- Surrogate Parent Technical Assistance Guide
- Comprehensive Plan
- Data Table L, Complaints and Hearings
- Student File Reviews

Meets requirements

The steering committee determined areas of meets requirements in their self-assessment to be that parents feel informed of their rights. Parents are informed of their rights in their native language or another mode of communication for all information relevant to the activity for which consent is sought. Consent was received for extended school year and evaluations in which services were provided are in the files. The district follows the comprehensive plan for confidentiality and access to records. There have been no complaints or due process hearings in the last 6 years.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

The monitoring team agrees with all the areas of meets requirements for procedural safeguards as concluded by the steering committee.

Principle 5 – Individualized Education Program

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written document for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised by the IEP team, which includes the parent. The specific areas addressed in principle five are IEP team, IEP content, transition components for secondary IEPs, annual reviews, transition from early intervention program, and IEP related issues.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Student File Reviews
- Comprehensive Plan
- OSEC Procedure Manual
- Prior Notice Form
- Parent Rights Brochure
- IEP Form
- Student Surveys
- Parent Surveys

- Teacher Surveys
- Child Count
- Early Intervention (Part C) Exit Information
- Hearings
- Monitoring Report

Needs improvement

The steering committee determined areas of needs improvement in their self-assessment to be that all prior notices sent out need to include information about what was planned for discussion at the meeting. The district needs to make sure reporting measures are recorded for all pages of the IEP goal pages.

Validation Results

Needs improvement

The monitoring team agrees with all the areas for needs improvement for individualized education program as concluded by the steering committee.

Out of compliance

24:05:24:05:04.03 Determination of eligibility

The school district shall provide a copy of the evaluation report and the documentation of determination of eligibility to the parent. Five speech files reviewed showed no evaluation report or documentation of determination of eligibility. The protocols in the files were the only source of finding eligibility.

24:05:27:01.03 Content of individualized education program

A student's IEP, must contain present levels of performance based upon the skill areas affected by the students identified disability. The present levels of performance are based upon the functional assessment information gathered during the comprehensive evaluation process. In 9 files reviewed present levels of performance were not linked to evaluation. Therefore, the student's annual goals were not consistently written as measurable or observable skills linked to the present levels of performance. For example, "___ will read at the 6th grade level". "___ will complete mathematical problems from units 1-4 of Master Your Money: A Guide to Budgeting with 90% or better accuracy." Five speech files reviewed did not show the condition for goals and objectives. For example, "___ will produce the r in isolation, phrases, sentences and conversational speech 90% of the time."

For each student beginning at age sixteen a statement of the needed transition services is required including interagency responsibilities or any needed linkages. Through interview and file reviews the review team found transition evaluations were not administered for 2 students approaching transition age, in order to design an outcome oriented process which promotes movement from school to post-secondary school activities. Transition activities were addressed but were not tied to current present levels of performance and evaluation. There is no documentation of outside agencies being invited to the IEP meetings for students 16 and older.

24:05:27:01.01. Team Membership

The regular education teacher of a student with a disability, as a member of the individualized education program team, must to the extent appropriate, participate in the development, review, and revision of the student's individualized education program. In 5/5 speech files reviewed the regular education teacher was not in attendance at the IEP meetings.

Principle 6 – Least Restrictive Environment

After the IEP is developed or reviewed, the IEP team must decide where the IEP services are to be provided. Consideration begins in the general education classroom for school age students. The specific areas addressed in principle six are placement decisions, consent for initial placement, least restrictive environment procedures, preschool children, and LRE related issues.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive Plan
- Parent Surveys
- Student File Reviews Comprehensive Plan
- Parent Surveys
- Student File Reviews
- Data Table F Placement Alternative

Needs improvement

The steering committee determined areas of needs improvement in their self-assessment to be that the LRE needs to be made on an individual basis. Justification statements need to include an explanation why instruction can't take place in the regular education classroom.

Validation Results

Needs improvement

The monitoring team agrees with all the areas for needs improvement for individualized education program as concluded by the steering committee.

Out of compliance

24:05:28:02. Continuum of alternative placements

Placement decisions need to be made after looking at the continuum of alternate placement.

Two students' files reviewed had resource room listed on the modification page. One student whose file was reviewed listed resource room services in the present levels of performance.

The IEP team must provide a written description of the options considered and the reasons why those options were rejected for each placement alternative considered for the student. One student file reviewed went directly to early childhood special education setting to accept with no rejection of the other alternative placements. All speech files reviewed did not use the alternative placements provided on the IEP. For example, "Rejected: Speech therapy in the regular classroom because it would be too distracting for __ and the other students." "Accepted: Speech therapy in the speech therapy room because it is quiet and free from distractions."